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Vol. III.—No. 125. MANCHESTER, Saturday, DECEMBER 31st. Price One Penny.

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VIA SUEZ CANAL,
AT
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Establishments,
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Dinner Wine, guaranteed a pure Sherry ..30s. per doz.
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Our Best Black Tea at 4s. is especially selected for our trade.

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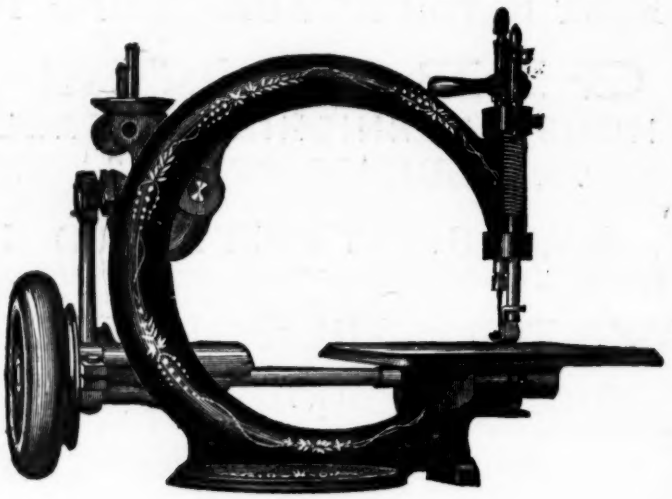

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AN EVENING WITH THE FIELD NATURALISTS.

THE title of the Manchester Field Naturalists' Society is agreeably suggestive of pleasant gatherings. It conjures up visions of delightful summer rambles through bosky dells and over flower-bedecked plains, in the company of fair creatures arrayed in the butterfly-splendour of muslin dresses, who ravishingly peep from beneath dainty sun-hats, and carry scientific-looking fern-cases coquettishly slung from their gentle shoulders; and of charming soirees during the winter season, at which one wanders with etherialised sensations, like a disembodied spirit clad in a suit of black, amidst seraphs in opera-cloaks and head-dresses, and surrounded by a botanical display, with the parts and names and purposes of which one is supposed to be on terms of comfortable intimacy. The title is also suggestive to the scientific or meditative mind of sundry excursions into Nature's quiet abiding-places, during which the enjoyment is enhanced by the light of knowledge and enlivened by the presence of appreciative society.

Influenced as the reader may determine by those emotions, which usually induce people to seek the feast of reason or the flow of soul, we made our way one night last week, in accordance with the information contained on a scrap of pasteboard in our possession, to the Memorial Hall, Albert Square. Having scaled a flight of stairs, we duly pledged our outer garments, across an improvised counter, to a juvenile uncle, receiving in exchange for them a small ticket to enable us to claim our own again; and having thus reduced ours elves to the appearance of an individual who has been in a crush and left part of his coat behind him, we completed our ascent to the hall. To any reader who may have the vulgar idea that a Field Naturalists' Soiree means anything in the way of eating or drinking, we respectfully say that it does not. On previous occasions, refreshments in the form of hot coffee was indeed provided, in a supplementary kind of way, in the rooms below the hall; but on the present evening, the weather being extremely cold, nothing of the kind was to be procured. The programme proper comprised promenading in order to inspect the specimens collected, a lecture, and then again promenading until 10.15, at which time carriages were to be ordered. We began therefore, in accordance with the prescribed duties of the evening, to promenade, and found ourselves in the company of ladies and gentlemen evidently bent upon some purpose, whether botanical or not we cannot say. That the specimens—we mean plants—present received some attention it is only just to say. The studious, or would-be studious, part of society was tolerably well represented by a number of young ladies in spectacles and gentlemen in long hair. The walls were hung round with large diagrams. We could not at first understand what the various botanical objects depicted on these had to do with English fields, until it occurred to us that they were big brothers of some of our diminutive and familiar plants, brought up in foreign parts. The lecturer announced for the evening was Mr. H. B. Smart, and the subject of his discourse "The Variations of Species," and on the tables the principal collections were in illustration of this subject. Several valuable portfolios of dried plants were lying about. The whole of one table, extending the greater part of the entire length of the hall, was occupied by a series of specimens of the class *Ranunculus* (contributed by Mr. C. Bailey), exhibiting an astonishing number of varieties. These were especially interesting to the student. Such contributions of course formed the specialities of the exhibition, but they were relieved by a number of extras in the way of ferns and flowers. Any who could not enjoy as fully as some of the people present the scientific details of the former, must at least have been charmed by the exquisite beauty of the latter.

A gradual settling down of the company into seats round the platform, and the appearance on the elevation of the amiable and benignant countenance of the secretary, Mr. Leo H. Grindon, warned us that the lecturer was about to begin. We accordingly occupied a seat. The chairman (Mr. C. Bailey), who spoke from between his arms, with which he grasped the desk before him as if afraid of being wafted away by a flight of oratory, smiled upon us in the usual manner; and having made the customary observations regarding the total absence of any necessity for him to say anything, ventured a few remarks. These however possessed the essence of wit, to wit, brevity; and in a few minutes the lecturer stood before us. The personage in question appeared to be one of those quiet, unassuming individuals who have a great deal more in them than one is disposed at first to imagine. This feeling grew upon us so strongly that, although like the majority of those present we were unable to hear a word of the reader's utterances, we came to the conclusion that the paper which was being read was a valuable composition; and at length, in a fit of desperation at the idea of the intellectual treat of which we were being deprived, we in common with several others took a favourable opportunity of making a rush to the platform, near which and perched on the extreme end of a seat we at great personal inconvenience had our favourable impressions confirmed. Mr. Smart appeared to agree with the opinions of Darwin respecting the development of species; and illustrating these opinions by examples from the vegetable kingdom, rendered his paper both appropriate and instructive. His remarks were well supplemented by our—shall we say veteran?—botanists Mr. Grindon, who in a neat little speech called attention to the significant fact, that however erratic at first sight many variations on the part of plants may appear to be, these variations are in every instance attempt, to reach a higher type. Progression and not retrogression is the law even in these digressions.

The Manchester Field Naturalists' Society has now had an existence of about ten years. Formed by a few earnest botanists, it soon became a fashionable institution, and at one time had six hundred members. Latterly, however, to use a botanical phrase, it has been getting into the sere and yellow leaf. The causes of this are various. In ten years' time many things happen. Pretty and agile young ladies, who are good for a ten-mile walk, grow into sedate, married women, with crowds of children requiring the maternal care; elegant young gentlemen, with a world of flowers to choose from, get captivated by one especial rose or lily, and so change into heads of households, men that have "had losses" and upon whose shoulders the business of the world presses. People who commence their careers with seeming æsthetic tastes and philanthropic intentions, develop into creatures upon whom all beauty is lost, and who care for no science but the science of gain. Men are not faithful to their early loves. Yet, admitting the mutability of all things, the Manchester Field Naturalists' Society ought to possess an inherent strength sufficient to make it proof against all such vicissitudes. It has in time past been an eminently useful institution in its refining influence upon Manchester society, and we cannot afford to lose such influences. The truth is that the *morale* of the society has been allowed to deteriorate sadly. We must say it—the soirees are as a rule exceedingly dull. As for the excursions, we had an opportuntity of accompanying one of the most successful during the last season. It was a pleasant trip; but *only* a pleasant trip; and what excursion would not be pleasant through a beautiful country on a glorious day? We were compelled to confess, however, that so far as natural science was concerned our journey would have been as fruitful had we been alone. True we had with us the accomplished author of *Manchester Walks and Wild Flowers*, but what could one botanist do with a line of people extending over a mile and a half, and people, too, who did not seem to be particularly anxious to learn, far less to discover. We missed the old *esprit de corps;* after tea we missed the interesting paper on the district visited; and on the return home we missed the companionable comparing and rich collection of specimens which we had expected.

We believe the executive are to blame somewhat for this degeneracy. With the best intentions in the world they are losing sight of the ostensible objects of the society in anxiety for its numerical welfare. The true strength of such an association lies in the number of sincere students in connection with it. Increase of numbers should not be regarded as a foundation but as a result. It is all very well for people to have enjoyable and merry excursions, and we have nothing to say

against excursionists as excursionists; but if they call themselves field naturalists they ought to study nature. It is possible that instead of people meeting together from a mutual love for a delightful science, that science may come to serve as a mere pretence for bringing people together. Let the executive be real botanists; let them keep the true strength of the society—its efficiency—in view, and serve this by securing good and popular lectures, arranging well-organised excursions, commanded by several leaders, who shall not only look after the tea and travelling, but likewise know something of the topography, geology, and botany of the place visited, and let them encourage and bring to the front the real students around them; and sure we are that they will not find a scarcity of people to appreciate healthful recreation combined with intellectual delights, which go on increasing even when youth and beauty and gas-light flirtations have passed into limbo. At any rate, a company composed of one hundred true lovers of nature would make a more influential and respectable Field Naturalists' Society than could be composed of ten times the number of mere excursionists.

THE PANTOMIMES.

THE managerial rage for spectacular display—a mania which we suspect is somewhat in excess of the popular demand—has of late years been developed at the expense of the plot and dialogue of a pantomime to such an extent, that the literary portion has come to be regarded as of quite secondary importance, or, strictly speaking, of no importance at all. A framework of some kind has of course been considered indispensable, but the flimsiest plot, the vilest puns, the most jejune of jokes, have sufficed for the purpose, if only there were scope and verge enough for the scene-painter and the property-man. The delicate fancies, the refined wit, and the delightful art with which Mr. Planché, for instance, charmed and lightened the mind, have given place to a panorama of gorgeous effects, designed merely for the eye—a passing show, which, when the

> Unsubstantial pageant's faded,
> Leaves not a wrack behind.

It is pleasant, therefore, to recognize in the text of the Prince's Theatre pantomime an amount of literary ability and constructive skill which brings this portion of the piece into more deserved and most welcome prominence. The quality of the workmanship is not equal to Mr. Planché's, of course, but it comes nearer to that master than anything we remember in Manchester since the palmy era of extravaganza some twenty years ago. Mr. Alfred Thompson, the writer, is the author of the extravaganza *Columbus*, the comedy-drama *On the Cards*, and the farce *Birds of Paradise*, all of which were originally produced at the Gaiety Theatre in London; and his *Harlequin Blackbird* is distinguished by the same light and cheerful attributes for which the Gaiety stage is famous. It partakes much more of the character of extravaganza than of the pantomime of the period; it is bright, wholesome, and buoyant throughout; and it contains no demons, or infernal machinery, or "wicked abodes," and only three or four hideous or outrageously absurd masks. The spirit and atmosphere, so to speak, of the piece have been faithfully and harmoniously preserved by the innumerable artists to whom the setting has been entrusted, and the spectacular accessories are in admirable keeping with the light enjoyable tone of the text. Of the nine scenes, a preference may perhaps be accorded to the valley with the waterfall and the palace garden, but there is general average of artistic merit and fitness in all. The pantomime, in short, only needs good acting to make it a complete success, and in this respect Mr. Calvert has been exceptionally fortunate. Mr. Wainwright is this year fitted with a capital part, to which he does ample justice; Mr. B. Sheridan, who enacts the King, is a burlesque actor of conspicuous ability; Miss Carry Nelson is a spirited and most graceful prince; and the minor characters are adequately and often most efficiently sustained. A charming "transformation scene" introduces us to the harlequinade, which has two special merits, brevity and an excellent clown; and the shadow exhibition is an innovation which one at least of the audience on Boxing Night greeted with undisguised wonder and delight. We think we may safely predict for *Harlequin Blackbird* a long and most successful career.

The *Forty Thieves*, at the New Queen's Theatre, written by a townsman, Mr. Shepley, has also very considerable literary merit. Its dialogue is sharp, satirical, and incisive, and contains many local "points" and hits, which only require a good delivery to tell upon a Manchester audience. The piece, however, would be improved by compression. There are scenes here and there which are somewhat deficient in action and just border on tediousness; moreover, the actors, unused apparently as yet to the extent of the theatre, do not raise their voices sufficiently, so as to fill every part of the auditorium. They would do well to follow example from Miss Thirlwall and Miss Dale, who deliver the very amusing speeches set down for them as chief and lieutenant of the forty thieves with immense vigour and effect. The pantomime has been placed upon the stage with considerable magnificence, far surpassing anything which Mr. Egan was able to achieve at the old Queen's Theatre, Spring Gardens. The waterfall scene is one of unusual beauty, and the appointments, especially of the forty thieves, are admirable. Another good feature is the excellence of the singing and the orchestra. If, by a judicious curtailment of the dialogue, the action of the piece were accelerated, the *Forty Thieves* contains all the elements of success; and the care and resources lavished upon its production, as well as the general excellence of the performance, cannot fail to raise the youngest of our theatres in public estimation.

The pantomime at the Royal we have not yet seen.

NUISANCE COMMITTEES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.

SIR,—Your criticisms on local matters are generally so correct that I cannot help calling your attention to a few inaccuracies, implied rather than real, in your article on the Salford Council and the Police in last week's *Sphinx*. In the first place it was the Broughton District Nuisance Committee who fined the defendant five shillings, and in the second place the policeman was evidently justified in the course he pursued—at least so Sir John Mantell thought, as his decision plainly shows.

Again, your article rather implies that in Salford only do committees, nuisance and otherwise, take upon themselves and exercise powers which they not only do not possess, but are the last persons whom the law would ever dream of endowing with such judicial functions. Unfortunately, encouraged by their town clerks and by the magistrates themselves, town councils have constituted petty sessions of their town, raising themselves into petty benches of magistrates. Each year the public—the hardest working section of it, too—is mulcted to the tune of hundreds of pounds in our city and our borough. Manchester leads the way, and Salford follows. The professed object of municipal fine-levying, or black-mailing, is a good and honest one, viz., to relieve the courts of trivial cases—cases which require some notice taken of them, but which from their number and general tediousness would occupy the whole time of any court. The average of cases judicially (?) decided upon fortnightly in Manchester and Salford cannot be less than four hundred, and the average amount of fines inflicted not less than two shillings in each case. Fancy what our courts would be with all these cases thrown upon them! Yet it is not right that partial and non-legally educated gentlemen should presume to sit in judgment on the "nuisances" committed by their fellows. I can assure you that the way in which these gentlemen twist the law is painful and marvellous. Again, it is a principle of all law that the accused shall have the benefit of any doubt. With Nuisance Committees "we must support our officers" is the legal axiom, and so the public goes to the wall.

The term "nuisance" covers hundreds of offences, from neglecting to have your chimney swept to falling asleep while driving, or playing at pitch and toss. Salford, I believe, has begun to reform the rottenness of her Denmark by refusing to meddle in beerhouse prosecutions. This is a step most righteously needed everywhere else. Let Nuisance Committees follow in the same wake, and let all corporate officers be well instructed in the art called Discretion, and then the cases they report will be fewer in number, and important enough to demand a magistrate's hearing, but too important to be decided before a self-constituted jury with peculiarly partisan tendencies. "Going to our chapel," belonging to the parlour-set of a certain public-house, or buying their tea and bacon at "our shop," has often saved many a saint's fine, while the Gentiles have received their forty stripes plus two.

I could give you a whole list of absolute perversions of our rights at common law persisted in continually by council committees, but will finish by giving you a specimen of the justice meted out to those who do not obey the summons—an illegal one, and therefore a powerless one—to attend a Nuisance Committee: they are fined double. I remain, yours respectfully,

COMME IL FAUT.

ST. ALBAN'S CHURCH.

THE CHORISTER'S SIDE OF THE QUESTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.

SIR,—Permit me, the "Quondam Chorister," to give you a little further information upon the subject of St. Alban's, which, perhaps, may not be uninteresting to your circle of readers. Though as a chorister I was chiefly known, yet it was not as such I was expelled. The sentence said, "all my offices and duties." I occupied a position analogous to that of rector's warden, and practically fulfilled the duties, and have frequently signed my name to papers as churchwarden; and the action of the "disciplinarian curate" was tantamount to suspending or expelling such an officer. When the curates came at Easter, they found me in the full exercise of my duties, and recognised as the one lay person about the church with any actual say or direction over the work and workers of the parish; and, moreover, in the possession of the following document:—

I, J. E. Sedgwick, hereby commit to your superintendence and arrangement all workers and works having duties and location within the chancel, vestry, north chapel, and basement storey of this tower, giving you full authority to appoint whom you will, and commission you to direct all, without exception, in the proper performance of the work allotted to them, holding you responsible for the safe keeping, knowledge of, and right use of all the church property used therein, and the proper behaviour and due execution of duties by all working under your control and oversight.

(Signed)

J. E. SEDGWICK.

Whether such an authority should have been given me or not is beside the question. I had it, and the curates knew it; and the extraordinary assumptions of Ritualism could not brook another power than Sacerdotalism, and they found in me a determined opponent to their Romeward leanings. Long before they laid hands on me, they had determined I must go. You are decidedly in error when you say that the practices I complained of to the Bishop were those "in the use of which I had aforetime delighted, and of which I most certainly never had complained." All that could not prove a lawful position. I have ever objected to, and many of St. Alban's singularities I was by no means satisfied with. From the first going there, at the invitation of the Rev. J. E. Sedgwick, six years ago, I have made known to him my objections, but of some things it was no use complaining. Others I secured the performance of for myself and those thinking with me, that the congregation might be saved from the hideous and absurd "acrobatism" which abounds in Ritualistic churches.

My only "offences" were: sending word to the "disciplinarian curate" that I was going for my holidays—a usual course—and summoning a meeting of the choir to discuss some of their troubles; and for these I am threatened with the "constable;" have an insulting letter sent; am not allowed to perform any of my duties; have everything they can secure locked against me; am prayed for in the vestry as "rebellious;" and then, before a full choir, a moderate number of people in the church, and a reporter present to take down all that was said, I am expelled, and for some days after the vestry and chancel gates are kept locked against me. All through this I do not say anything, because it was done in Mr. Sedgwick's absence, and I trusted that he would do me justice; and as the curate read Lord Shaftesbury's Act to the choir to frighten them, and which he said was his authority, I stay away entirely, and occupy the next three months in vain attempts to get the Rev. J. E. Sedgwick to say publicly and authoritatively, what he admitted privately, that this curate was wrong. This he could not do without damaging himself with the members of that organisation which is supporting the absurd pretensions of Ritualistic priests throughout the Anglican communion; and though very anxious to have me back, and helping to strengthen a place which, in a letter, he says I have "*greatly, very greatly*, helped to build up," he dared not do what was right, and what every sensible person it was submitted to said he should do—reverse the action of his curate.

It was from no vindictive feeling that I took the action you refer to, but purely and simply to save St. Alban's from the hands of those who will make it a feeder to St. Chad's, and perform the service in the Prayer-book as a burlesque and a deceit, which it would have come to be if not checked in time. I have had to suffer much for St. Alban's and have well proved my devotion to the place. Because I confronted Popery in that church, and called it what it is; because I was indignant at the appearance of shams and evasions; because I asked for the authority for every new ceremony and pretty rite, and gave no aid to the overlaying of the service with postures and performances sought for in the Roman Breviary and Missal; because I required every person undertaking work to have and know his place; because I expected curates ever to take proper care of the property and valuables of the church (of which there is more than a thousand pounds' worth within the boundaries mentioned in my authorisation), *Ritualistic Sacerdotalism* had an opponent which it could not work with. So the curates, against the advice of everyone acquainted with the "strength and weakness" of St. Alban's, determined to oust me, and break up the organisation by which I worked, and the real parochial work of St. Alban's was carried on. My honour was and is as dear to me as is any other person's to him. I must be vindicated. The righteousness of my cause I feared no inquiry into; and as the Rev. J. E. Sedgwick could not do me justice, I was bound to take every means possible, lawful, and expedient. Therefore I wrote to the Bishop, to inform him of what teachings and practices the curates he had given permission to stay at St. Alban's were displaying in the congregation; but I never complained of the Rev. J. E. Sedgwick, or of St. Alban's as we have had it for six years past, only of it as it has become since the curates got the upper hand. For however closely I may have been identified with the St. Alban's of the past, I never forgot I was a Churchman, and was known and esteemed for my work's sake, and in circles where St. Alban's people could never be.

I have objected to lighted candles, to the use of wafer-bread, to mixing water with the wine, to private celebrations of Holy Communion, to children not in their "teens" going to confession, to confessions going on in different parts of the church immediately before and after service, and to the "ordinance" being placed on the same level as Holy Communion. I have objected to the calling of Holy Communion—"mass," and to its being held as useful in purifying souls from sin after death. I have objected to the invoking of saints in sermons, and to a very, very young priest coming forth to the chancel steps and saying to a large congregation that "Our Lord bids me thank you for your attention to me this day." I do object to the service being said so low that the words cannot be distinguished a dozen yards away; and to elevations, and genuflexions, and bowings, and crossings of persons and books, and kissings, which remind of what is directed for services in another communion which our Church has stigmatised as having "detestable enormities." These I felt were not indigenous to St. Alban's, only exotic, and it was time to invoke extraneous aid to purge from St. Alban's, for which some of us have suffered much and are still ready to suffer more, lest they eat up its life, and make it a hateful thing in the eyes of hard-headed but truth discerning Manchester. My best parting blessing was to try and remove the poisonous thing they were nesting. Our tolerant and kind diocesan they were presuming upon, and the passive kindness he has shown was only used as another reason why deeper root should be taken by the Ritualism which is blighting so many congregations of fair promise.

If St. Alban's would take only half the trouble to do what is right that it does to get out of trouble, it would soon see past all its difficulties, and, while keeping the law, obtain the sympathy and receive the support of the Church public of Manchester. But they claim a hardihood in sinning as a virtue, and an immunity from punishment as a right. Solemnly and deliberately, as the only means by which they could escape almost suppression, the congregation and clergy put a sufficient number of signatures to a document promising to conform to a model complete for all congregational wants, and the public who found the funds to pay for the erection of the church have a right to see that promise fulfilled. Again, every promise, upon the strength of which the inhibition was *relaxed*, not removed, has been deliberately broken, and events have compelled me to endorse, what I once indignantly denied, that which the late Bishop said, "I know St. Alban's won't keep their word."

The "prominent member of the congregation" did not write to Canon Anson to invoke his aid, and if he had done he only did his duty. Your own remarks prove that something should be applied to remedy a great evil. He has all along very properly complained of unnecessary changes and ceremonies rashly introduced, and the complete destruction of our once effective and hearty service. He had every right to complain, for few men in this city have done so much for the accessories of worship, in a single congregation, as this gentleman has. Yet (so the congregation understand) he is preached at, and taunted with the sin of sacrilege, because he has expressed an opinion as to the abuse of his munificent gifts.

As far as I can learn, no order has yet been given as to adopting black stoles, long surplices, "cathedral service," vergers, and rented pews; but heresy, illegal positions, Roman phraseology, foreign gestures and postures have been condemned, and the Popery which was insidiously creeping in has for the present been crushed. For myself I am satisfied, and as soon as the curates are gone I am back again, and the numerous band of helpers will be organised once more to work for love of their Master and affection to the Rev. J. E. Sedgwick, and ready one and all of us to stand by St. Alban's as a Church of England church—exemplifying a religion which is first pure, then peaceable, and which in its externals and doctrine is catholic and reformed; St. Alban's, in short, as I took the liberty of informing the "disciplinarian curate," in my letter notifying my absence for holidays, as we have had it, as he found it, and as we fixedly and determinedly intend it to continue.

Since writing the above I have been informed that one of the curates used the phrase, "the immaculate heart of Mary," in a sermon on Sunday night. Every week seems to make the atmosphere more Roman. Yours faithfully,

THE "QUONDAM CHORISTER."

Manchester, December 27, 1870.

[We have been compelled for want of space to leave out a few sentences which were not material to our correspondent's explanation. —ED.]

MISS BECKER AND THE BISHOP.

AN IDYLL AFTER TENNYSON.

BY J. F. T.

THEY met at Christmas, at the Ragged Feast
By good Will Mather out in Salford spread:
Not feast of wine and cakes, but speech and thought,
And pleasant interchange of compliment.
The festive hall enclos'd a brilliant throng:
Heinrich, the whilom candidate, who slings
Relentless logic in familiar phrase;
Who knows what was, what is, what is to be,
And bids all other persons hold their noise;
Jacob, the minor of a noble pair,
Who chase delusions from the minds of men;
Guillaume, the beak, of Art the favour'd son,
The skilful accoucheur of modest worth,
Whose full Cesarean cheque-book brings to light
The wealth of genius from its hidden mine.
These grac'd the hall of Mather. Also James,
And she the love-lorn dame called Lydia:
These two, the first in place, though last to name,
Sat on the dais, and the Earth was glad.

Love rules the Court, the Camp, the Grove, the Church,
The Church the chiefest—for the Church is love.
And he, a trusted son of Mother Church,
Expounded maxims and dealt out the law,
As what were women's duties and the like;
Why they were strong in much, not strong in all;
Strong in the witching sphere of hearth and home,
And gentle ways of mother, sister, wife—
Not strong in straddling over awkward stiles,
Which baulk the paths of public life of men,
And tear the raiment as the sheep is torn
Who in the thorny hedgerow leaves her wool.
Thus spake our James, in pleasant hearty voice,
With kind considerate speech and honest mind,
Fresh in his looks, as if from daisy fields
Down by the breezy Berkshire White Horse hills,
Where whistling waggoners and cottage smoke
Make blithe the landscape: thence our hero hied,
Sought by the statesman in a happy mood,
To rule the Church in nonconforming lands.

Him Lydia spotted as he rose and talk'd,
Lydia the loftiest at our Board of Schools,
Freest of women in a world of serfs.
She flashing forth with spectacles on nose,
Like Arthur's brand, Excalibur, her light
Full on the prelate blaz'd a wintry fire,
And clutch'd her distaff and her bodkin drew,
Red with the ancient gore of many foes.
For as in Spring a softer iris tints
The bosom plumage of the cooing dove,
So when the Winter Solstice knits the stream,
And tips with mauve each well-remembered nose,
The top-knot feathers of the raven gleam
With swarthiest polish and metallic glow:
So Lydia, low'ring, pull'd her visor down,
And clank of armour preluded her speech.

Grim was the silence in Will Mather's hall,
As, lance in rest, the vengeful Lydia bore
Bang on the rosy prelate in his chair.
"The purpose of my life," the maid begun,
"Is to make war on devils." (Hear, and cheers.)
"Shorn as with garden shears, their forked tails
"Lie quiv'ring, blown by screaming gales about.
"This was the mission which my fathers bade
"Me work unending all my earnest life;
"No sampler early woven, no wax flowers,
"No slothful slippers for the feet of men,
"No apple piety of household drudge
"Pluck'd the high purpose from my sounding breast.
"With beasts at Ephesus I cannot war,
"But I must fight with hosts of beasts at home."

Pale grew the faces at Will Mather's feast,
A high-wrought funkiness o'erspread the scene;
The lights burnt blue—so blue so true the maid,
Who play'd the game of snap-dragon alone.
And Lydia fum'd fuliginous with reek
Of fire volcanic and sulphureous spray.
The lava stream boil'd round the prelate's chair,
And Heinrich, Guillaume, Jacob said, "'Tis warm.
"This fiery tea-pot breweth wondrous tea,
"Bohea Bo-she she gives it without sugar,
"This is the Indian game of hugger-mugger."

Still, all the time the noise of battle roar'd,
There was no apprehensiveness in James.
He, tranquil bachelor, beheld the strife:
She, Maid of Orleans, cleft the foeman's helm,
And dash'd along with deeds of derring-do,
Then sank subdued, and all the world was still.

But, oh! ye fates that guard our single men,
Look out for sequences to squalls like these.
Jove laughs at lover quarrels. If for this
A softer issue in the realms of Love
Should lie conceal'd—if coat of male should soon
Wear in our Lydia's eyes a smoother look,
And the warm sleeve be drawn around her neck,
Unheeded of the proud, high-stepping dame,
Would not this diocese in tears lament
The joust of arms in William Mather's Hall?

TOWN TALK,
AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

NO breakfast-table is now complete without a full, true, and particular account of two or three railway accidents every morning. Indeed, a railway accident where half a dozen people are not killed and half a score disabled, is fast becoming almost as commonplace and insignificant a piece of news as a battle where ten thousand are not slain and fifty thousand taken prisoners. These casualties have of late become so frequent, that one feels loth to censure the most flagrant and unreasonable sentiments expressed by the public, for fear lest one be taken to excuse the companies. But we must point out that all this talk about making the companies pay, having no mercy on them, forcing them by act of parliament to construct special lines for goods traffic, and all the rest of it, means making other people pay. People talk as if railway companies were corporations making enormous profits out of a victimised public, when the truth is that many of them do little more than pay expenses. The cases are very rare indeed where railway companies make more than a fair profit on their enterprise and outlay. It is evident, therefore, that the public gets all the safety that can be given at the price; and if it wants more, it will have to pay for it. We have not a word to say against its getting more, but we do think that the remembrance that it will have to pay for all it gets may put a salutary check on some of the wild notions prevalent.

THE ANNUAL COLLECTION TWICE A YEAR.

We hope that the promoters of this novel tax upon going to church are at length satisfied that people do not agree with them. The amount collected for the hospitals on the 18th is pretty good proof that folks do not approve of this local adaptation of the most unpopular expedient of Mr. Robert Lowe. We further hope that the promoters will let two or three months pass before they levy a third imposition, so that we may at least be permitted to enjoy our Prince's pantomime without continual reminders of sores, and fevers, and taxes, staring down at us from every wall.

DEAF AND DUMB DUNS.

We have been favoured with a visit from a deaf and dumb gentleman, who nearly drove us out of our mind by the peculiarity of his behaviour. After shutting the door behind him in the most scrupulous manner—carefully examining the lock meanwhile—he rapidly approached us. We immediately began to calculate the distance of the nearest lunatic asylum, and to wonder whether dangerous patients were confined there. To our alarmed query as to his business he made no reply, but plunged his hand into the pocket of his coat. Imagining it was perhaps some irate individual, whose conduct had been criticised in our columns, come to take summary vengeance upon us, we were about to cry for help, when the intruder struck us speechless by presenting something at our head. We were much reassured when we perceived that it was nothing worse than a slate. But our alarm revived on reading an enquiry as to our exact individuality inscribed upon it. What terribly personal design the mysterious stranger had upon us we were unable further to enquire, before the individual presented us with—a report. What the society was of which he was the representative we did not stop to read; for, seeing that the stranger with the slate was bent upon making a night of it, we incontinently took to our heels, and never stopped or dared to look behind us till we sheltered in the sanctity of the domestic hearth. It really is too bad of any society—however good its object may be—to send deaf and dumb emissaries to occupy the time of people who have business to attend to, by endeavouring to engage them in a controversy, to be carried on by means of a slate and a pencil. Duns of any sort are bad enough, but deaf and dumb duns are too much for anyone.

A BIT OF "ECCLESIASTICAL" INTELLIGENCE.

The best laid schemes o' mice an' men,
Gang aft a-gley—

Sang Burns, that chief among the great Northern skalds. So do schemes of testators too sometimes, especially if well-intentioned. A notable instance of the latter came under our notice the other day, which we should be sorry to believe is true, though we are sadly afraid it is. Miss Atherton, the pious and munificent foundress of Holy Trinity Church, in Stretford New Road, bequeathed among other charitable legacies a sum of £1,000, the income of which, when invested, was to go towards increasing the stipend of the minister or rector of that church. Now the living of Holy Trinity is one of those of which the income, whether derived from pew-rents, endowments, or any such permanent source, is made up to £300 a year by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; so taking the income of this legacy at £40 per annum, it enables the Commissioners to pay so much less, and the rector's stipend is not increased by a stiver. The legacy is virtually a gift of £40 per annum to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners! Was this, does anybody think, the intention of the kind-hearted and venerable lady? And if not, what have the lawyers been about?

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS ON 'CHANGE.

7.—WINE AND OIL.

NOTWITHSTANDING the ancient saying regarding the merits of wine and oil, the vendors of these commodities upon the Exchange are not entirely regarded as instruments which make glad the heart of man, or impart to him a joyful countenance. Indeed, they are generally encountered with as little ceremony and cordiality as if they were dealers in assafœtida, or in compound mixtures of the rivers Irk and Irwell, and carried about with them samples of these odoriferous compounds in bottles for inhalation and inspection. There are exceptions of course, who appear to be inoculated with the exhilarating and lubricating nature of their own wares; but taking the bulk of wine and oil agents as a class, the magnates of cotton and of iron, who form the substance of the subscribers, generally as a rule prefer to have a back view of them. Not that the manipulators of cotton or of iron are at all superior, morally, physically, or frequently pecuniarily, to the distributors of wine and oil. Not a bit of it! But, metaphorically speaking, the individuals who produce, and traffic in the fabrics which clothe and adorn the outward frames of the human species, assume or usurp the chief seats in the commercial synagogue, before those who lubricate the stomachs and machinery of cotton spinners and manufacturers. There is as much difference in one sense between the great Panjandrum, with his argosies on every sea, or Polyspindles, the owner of ten factories and a few collieries, and the humble oil hawker, as there was between Ahasuerus on his throne, and Mordecai the Jew sitting in sackcloth at the king's gate.

An affable gentlemen like Sir Thomas Bazley, Bart., M.P., can be approached by any one without fear of rebuff. This remark was applicable to that gentlemen before he represented this city in what he himself calls "The Commons House of Parliament," before the days of household suffrage, when every constituent of course thinks that he has a personal and vested interest in every portion of the honourable baronet's person, from his white hat down to his well-built boots. We verily believe that if any insurance agent were to ask Sir Thomas Bazley to insure his life as a provision for his heirs, he would promise to take that absurd request into his consideration. It would be too much, however, to expect in an uncomfortable, crowded, scrambling place of business like the Exchange that all subscribers, big-wigs and others, should be possessed of the same gracious consideration as the senior Whig-Radical member for Manchester. "Blessed is he that expecteth little, for he shall not be disappointed," is a proverb of the truth of which wine and oil agents ought to be pretty well convinced from practical experience. "The small fry who flicker round the great luminaries," as a late respectable subscriber expressed himself in his peculiar vernacular, are no doubt well used to rebuffs, and judging from their demeanour we should say that they were pretty well case-hardened. To continue the metaphor, after the manner of the aforesaid humourist, we imagine that "the small fry" are like the eels—pretty well used to being skinned.

But sooth to say we are not surprised at a good deal of the snubs which are administered and curt answers which are given. This kind of guerilla warfare, where you stand to be deliberately "potted," is

irritating, particularly when you have been assailed in the same way twenty times previously within a few hours. Panjandrum and Polyspindles both have a good deal upon their hands, and they certainly do not go upon 'Change for the purpose of buying wine and oil from strangers, when the shortest note or intimation to their own tradesmen will be promptly attended to. Not that we desire to interfere with competition, and every business connection must have a beginning some day, but we have no doubt that the annoyance of this incessant and indiscriminate drumming accounts for much of the bearishness which forms so conspicuous a feature of the manners and customs on 'Change.

The wine merchants who frequent the Manchester Exchange may be divided into three classes:—the permanent resident merchants; the resident representative agents, who act for London and foreign firms; and the intermittent visitors, who arrive periodically, like the swallows and the woodcocks. The resident wine merchants are unobtrusive men, who go about their business in a leisurely way, and are as independent characters as any subscribers on 'Change. Probably they rely upon their past reputation, confident that the customers who have once got something from them particularly choice, will never rest satisfied until they have had some more of it. The merchant who is known to have some fine old Madeira, or some 1820, 1834, 1847, 1857, or whatever the years may be, and other favourite port vintages, has no occasion to go begging for orders. As the recruiting sergeant ties his coloured ribbons to his cap, and stands at a street corner till the lads come round him, so the wine merchant, with lots of Queen's shillings in his fist, in the shape of choice wines in his cellar, has merely to take up his stand at the receipt of custom at his own office, or stroll on 'Change, and he will find plenty of recruits. At the same time he will probably find them something new which he can recommend. The resident merchant, by dint of long experience, knows his customers, knows what they want, and when they want it. Of course he keeps his eyes open for new customers, and gets them, but he does not make it a matter of life and death. There is that fine old boy, Mr. Black Friars, whom we must have known for about a century, and in our own experience we do not recollect his ever begging for an order yet. As for Mr. Black Friars, junior, he always appears to be more bent upon cracking jokes than cracking sample-bottles. Nevertheless, if you should happen to have some business in the adjoining borough, and before crossing the boundary thereof you should find Mr. Black Friars, junior, standing like the recruiting-sergeant at his door, the probability is that he will invite you to partake of as good a glass of dry sherry as ever you tasted in your life. It is the same with other residentials, but as they have been abundantly dealt with in a former series of articles in this journal, two years since, by another pen, it is unnecessary to allude to them further.

The representative residential wine agent goes about his business in a different and more obtrusive way. Probably he finds himself in the business from a fortuitous concourse of circumstances, having been brought up to something entirely different. However, the hour has come and the man. Some good London or foreign house wants an agent. This is the hour; and the man appears. Having a large private connection of friends and acquaintances, he sets to work ding-dong, right and left. The probability is that he knows very little at first of what he is selling, but that does not matter. What he wants are orders which bring him commissions, and if he has a large connection of old friends, orders and commissions he gets. Gradually he works up a good business, and takes matters more coolly. He gains experience, knows what people wish to drink and avoid, and probably settles down into a good business, and having brought his principals a good connection, is able to dictate to them almost his own terms. At first he is very busy on 'Change, and does a good deal of ear-wigging and button-holding; but probably having the *entrée* to several of the clubs, and knowing every hotel-keeper and every wine-drinker in the town, he finally ends by being almost as unobtrusive an individual as the wine merchant before described.

The migratory wine merchant is a horse, or rather a bird, of quite another colour, and a very downy bird he is too, combining the industry and activity of the swallow, the wisdom of the owl, and the rapacity of the vulture. In all weathers, like the swallow, he skims high and low after the insects; he pounces on his prey by night like the owl, and he gorges his booty like the vulture. His appearance on 'Change creates almost a panic among the innocents, and "like an eagle in a dovecot," he "flutters the Volces in Corioli." Our itinerant and cosmopolitan friend, who often, but not always, hails from the Vaterland, generally comes upon his victim head-on, so to speak; but if you contrive to dodge him for a bit, he is sure to get upon your trail again, when he will track you down like an Indian trapper, and never rest till he gets your scalp. Fertile in resource, merciless and unrelenting in his pursuit, he will have you by some means or other. He will penetrate into the sanctum-sanctorum of your office, catch you at your club, dodge you in the street, and run you down into an hotel. It is just possible that you may accidentally come across him at a friend's house, and even there the scalping-knife is not sheathed. But the best hunting-ground is the Exchange, and it is quite amusing to see the number of dodges and shifts which the doomed animal has recourse to in order to elude his pursuer. When we say doomed, we mean doomed to be snared and caught, if not scalped. Sometimes the hunter attacks boldly in front. At other times he comes upon the quarry stealthily from behind, with his feet shod as it were with noiseless india-rubber goloshes. Sometimes he marks his prey from a distance, and by a sort of circumambient motion, gradually and by narrowing circles emeshes him in his toils. Meanwhile the attacked party, aware of his approach, makes use of one of the numerous pillars in the room as an entrenchment. If he finds danger imminent behind that fortification, he frequently has recourse to a sortie, and, rushing from his place of refuge, effects a junction with some ally whom he sees in the neighbourhood, and plunges into a conversation of apparently the most important nature. The pursuer, however, knows perfectly well that this is only a ruse, and is certain to renew the attack on the first opportunity. In the meantime, however, another fox crosses his scent, and he is after him full-cry.

One thing the wine merchants and agents have in common: they always have exactly the thing which will suit you, from a pipe of the latest vintage to a modicum of "curious old port," worth two guineas a bottle. In this as in other trades the seller has to humour his customers, and of all men who are possessed with that expensive hobby a "taste," there is none who has more whimsical fads and fancies than the "connoeseur" of wine.

We have occupied so much time with the wine merchant that we have left ourselves little space to discuss the man of oil; but as in the search after business they have many characteristics in common, we need not go over the same ground again. As the wine merchant has, or ought to have, a mellow crusty flavour about him, so in the same way, assimilating himself to his calling, the oil agent is smooth and oleaginous. Dickens was fond of painting fat unctuous men, and he generally put them in the oil business. "I am in the oil and colour trade," said Mr. Snawley, when he introduced his two step-sons to Mr. Whackford Squeers, and handed over these two hapless boys to the charge of that amiable but notorious pedagogue. When the Rev. Chadband discoursed upon "te-ruth," and answered the question which puzzled Pontius Pilate, he seemed to exude oil from the palms of his hands and the pores of his cheeks. We forget whether he was in Snawley's trade or not, but we know that he was particularly partial to hot muffins and crumpets well saturated with butter and grease. The oil agent has a deal of hard work to go through before he can really "strike ile." He has so many ruts and obstacles to overcome that his wheels and general gearing require constant greasing. He is as active and even more peripatetic than the itinerant wine agent. You cannot go to any corner of Lancashire and Yorkshire where there is a cotton or woollen factory, on any off-day in the week, but you are almost certain to encounter an oil agent diligently plying his vocation. He has a wonderful knack of getting at the millowner or manager, and can burrow his way to that magnate if he is anywhere about the premises. Whether he administers *palm-oil* to some of the custodians of the place, or how, we cannot say, but he certainly overcomes preliminary obstacles which disconcert more pretentious men.

A laborious and up-hill life is that of the oil agent; but, as necessity is the mother of invention, we suppose he manages to make a living out of it somehow or other. There are, however, tritons among minnows, and we know of more than one oil merchant who holds Her Majesty's commission, and drives about among the mills in the country attended by his man wearing a cockade in his hat. Apart from his customers, the oil merchant does not always retain his emollient properties; and it is

not so very long since one of the fraternity kicked another up and down the Exchange,—a playful entertainment, which cost him something like £200 sterling, but was an amusing interlude between the general performances at that establishment.

[FROM A NATURALIST'S NOTEBOOK.]

THE BLACK GAME.

[TETRAO TETRIX.]

MOUNTAIN and moor at this season rarely echo to the sound of the gun. Black cock and grouse possess their barren and solitary realms in peace, whilst the ptarmigan, safe in his rocky fastnesses, looks down on the world below with the tranquillity of a hermit. Though the day be wild and stormy, and a fierce westerly gale hurls the fitful rain against our study windows, we recall bright hours spent among the blossoming heather, where we laughed and quaffed, made goodly bags, nor forgot to note the habits, instincts, and peculiarities of the objects of our chase.

"Black cock" is one of the English names for the male of the black game. The female is called a "grey hen," and the young are named "poults"—a term applied to these noble birds generally on the borders of Hampshire and Dorsetshire, in Devon and Somerset. The black cock, whose plumage when in full beauty has defied all pencils save that of Landseer, is, if we except the capercalze, the pride of the British fauna. Widely scattered over the central parts of Europe, it is tolerably plentiful in France and Germany, whilst in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Russia, it is abundant. With our sporting ancestors it was a bird of mark and importance, and was followed by gay ladies and gallant gentlemen, not as now with breech-loader and central-fire cartridge, but with falconer and hawk. Turberville (1611) is great on the subject, and tells all whom it may concern—"If your goshawk be ever a good partridger, beware you let her not flee the poult." In the southern counties of England black game is carefully preserved, and many a strong pack is still to be found on the heaths that border the British and English Channels; but as improved agriculture learns to utilise these wastes, the domains of the tetrao tetrix become more and more confined, and ere long probably in the west—except on tracts that defy profitable cultivation—his place will know him no more. In the north, however, it is plentiful, and in the Highlands abundant. In the Zoological Gardens, in the Regent's Park, a few wretched captives may be seen, but all our attempts to domesticate the bird have hitherto failed. In Sweden, we believe, it has often been known to breed in confinement.

In complexion, Othello scarcely differed more from Desdemona than does the black cock from his mate. We will endeavour to give a faithful pen-and-ink sketch of the pater and mater before us, which, as Hood was wont to say, "are a pair, but not a match." The male, when well fed and full grown, weighs about four pounds; his bill is of a dull blackish hue; the irides, hazel; the head, neck, breast, and back, glossy black shot with steel, blue, and purple; the eyebrows are naked, and of a bright vermilion; the wing, coverts, and tail are pitch black; the secondaries, tipped with white, form, with the adjacent coverts, a band across each wing; the under coverts of the tail are pure white, and the legs clothed with hair-like feathers, of a dark brown mottled with grey. The exterior feathers of the tail, which are much longer than those in the centre, curve outwards with a regular and graceful sweep, and give a very distinctive character to the bird. The gait and attitude of the black cock well become a free denizen of the world. Poised lightly yet firmly on his legs, with head erect and observant eye, he looks indeed the feathered monarch of the hills—the very type of boldness, vigilance, and self-reliance. We shall refer to the exercise of these qualities hereafter.

The grey hen is considerably smaller than her spouse, and seldom exceeds the weight of 2½lbs. She looks not unlike a magnified red grouse, being of a bright brownish-grey, mottled and barred over the entire body. The under coverts of the tail are white streaked with black, and the upper coverts are of a bright orange-brown speckled with black. The young birds by the 20th of August are only tall, awkward hobbledehoys, having neither the colour and carriage of the father, nor any likeness to the beauty and symmetry of the mother. As a rule they lie better than the red grouse. Later in the season the old birds are sufficiently watchful to make the sportsman exert all his wiles. The favourite haunts of the tetrao tetrix are on the skirts of hills in heathy and mountainous districts, which are covered with a natural growth of birch, alder, and the like. Such straggling woods usually contain tracts of open ground, where the sweet bog-myrtle, the bilberry, and calluna abound. Here the black game find food and shelter. During the winter the old males form themselves into a kind of club, and live quite an independent bachelor life.

Tennyson tells us—

> In the spring a young man's fancy
> Lightly turns to thoughts of love.

And so it is with the black cock. In the first week of April he grows tired of solitude, and thinks of taking what Falstaff calls "a parcel of wives." Fighting is now quite out of fashion with us accomplished bipeds. Now-a-days one gentleman beholds unmoved another gentleman gaze on his particular treasure, his betrothed lady-love—takes it as a matter of course, and does not even thirst for his blood; but such peaceful sentiments are not shared by the beaus of the woods. What battles have we not seen on the grassy margins of their haunts! The stoutest knight with ruffled crest, flashing eyes, and harness burnished till it reflects the level rays of the morning sun like a mirror, stalks forth and utters his war-cry. It is soon answered, and a very pretty set-to is the consequence. For three or four weeks at a time we have often been a regular attendant at the lists, taking advantage of bush and boulder to keep out of sight; till at length, weary of strife and disposed for armed mediation, we have appeared suddenly on the field, put the combatants to flight, and gathered the spoils—rent plumes and glossy feathers. In Courland, Livonia, Buffon tells us, the contests to which we have referred are so furious as to have suggested to an ingenious peasantry a means of capturing the belligerents.—"The call" of the black cock is imitated, and when answered by the birds in the neighbourhood a stuffed figure is put through various actions and attitudes representing the opposite passions of love and war. Such goings-on light up the impressionable feelings of the feathered spectators, and a fierce faction-fight ensues, which so absorbs their attention that they fall an easy prey to the cunning hunter who has deluded them. This story may be partly true, for should the country be favourable the birds might occasionally be stalked while so occupied. The ground chosen for the contests we have witnessed precluded the possibility of practising with any success the kind of poaching which is carried on in Livonia.

In May the hen lays from six to twelve eggs; these are of a yellowish grey colour, blotched with reddish brown. Her nest consists of a few fibres of grass, and is usually placed under the shelter of a bunch of tall ling or myrica gale. The food of the black game during the summer consists chiefly of the seeds of some species of juncus, as well as the young shoots of the heather. In the autumn the cranberry, the blaeberry, the whortleberry, as well as the arbutus ura ursi, afford them luxurious banquets, nor does inclement winter leave them unprovided, for it gives them buds of the birch and alder, and the delicate shoots of the pine. Unlike the red grouse, the black game perch freely, and thus in deep snows still contrive to find a plentiful subsistence. In Sweden and Norway these birds bury themselves in the snow for shelter, and we think it probable that the same course is followed in our more temperate climate when the bitter winds of January and February howl over the hill side.

During the autumn our markets depend on a home supply, which is furnished chiefly from Scotland and two or three of our northern counties. The writer spent the last September at Keswick, and found the young poults both cheap and plentiful. Our winter supply comes from Sweden and Norway, and is fully equal to the demand. Sometimes as many as three or four hundred dozen are brought to London and Hull by a single vessel. These birds are snared by the peasantry, and being frozen are safely preserved till an opportunity occurs of forwarding them to the English market.

The black cock is a very early riser, being up and dressed before the dawn; at such times he feeds and plays in perfect confidence. These habits are prettily described in the following lines:—

> Good morrow to thy sable beak,
> And glossy plumage dark and sleek,

Thy crimson moon and azure eye,
Cock of the heath so wildly shy.
I see thee shyly cowering through
The gauzy web of silver dew,
That twinkles in the morning air
Like casement of my lady fair.

As an article of food the heath cock stands deservedly high. Equal in our opinion to the red grouse in flavour, he is less apt to be tough, and this is no small merit.

Suppressio veri is a grave offence against morals, and one of which no naturalist ought to be guilty. Still, even the best men have some bias, and we fear we may, through excessive partiality for our black friend, have said less of his faults than truth required. As a husband and father the black cock cannot be praised; on the contrary, he deserves censure, for he neither helps his mate to build her nest, nor does he take her place on it when she is compelled to quit it in search of food. Neither does he watch over his offspring, but leaves them to the care and nurture of the mother, who discharges her trust with an assiduity worthy of all imitation; watching over her brood till the autumnal moult has shown them fit to provide for their own safety in the dangerous world on which they are launched. There are few of nature's sweet children from whom our higher humanity may not learn some useful lessons, or, as Gray sings:

Thus, every object of creation
Can furnish hints for contemplation;
And from the most minute and mean,
A virtuous mind can morals glean.

THE FRACAS AT ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S.

THE office of churchwarden in the Church of England is both a peculiar one and a complicated one. Had Mr. Andrew, the so-called people's churchwarden at St. John Baptist's, been a wise man, he would have taken care to have posted himself up as to his duties before acting as weakly and as foolishly as he did on Christmas-day last. However, perhaps Mr. Andrew could not or dare not act other than he did. He was elected as a firebrand by a score or so other firebrands, and moreover is backed by a malignant body yclept the Church Association. It will be remembered that not long ago the Rev. James Bardsley delivered a lecture on behalf of this association in the very parish where these disturbances have taken place—a lecture as offensive to good taste as it was a breach of clerical etiquette. There is little doubt but that, morally, Mr. Bardsley is just as guilty of this row at St. John's as is Mr. Andrew.

Taking the statement of Mr. Andrew and his followers, the parishioners generally were dissatisfied and disquieted by the Romanising practices carried on by the Rev. Mr. Marshall. To scotch this gentleman's babylonish wheel, they determined to put into office a determined "Protestant" as their churchwarden; so in some sort or other, and in some place or other, they elected this Mr. Andrew. The validity of this election was disputed at the time as not being the result of a vote of a Vestry, but Mr. Andrew was duly declared in by Archdeacon Anson, and believing himself to be truly elected has continued to act. Here, indeed, the mischief which culminated on Christmas-day began, and Mr. Marshall has himself to thank. Through temerity or culpable carelessness, Mr. Marshall neglected to summon a vestry meeting at the usual time, and when he did at last pretend to summon one, it was done so hurriedly that it naturally assumed a hole-and-corner complexion, and the rampagious "Protestants" were not slow to take advantage of the occasion. Calling a meeting of their own, they there and then elected their candidate in opposition to the one elected at the Rector's meeting. So inauspicious a beginning augured ill for a happy future; and almost immediately Mr. Andrew handed in a letter to his Rector, in which he coolly made about a score demands for alterations in the services and in the structure of the church or its furniture. Had Mr. Marshall complied with some of these demands he would have laid himself open to several actions at law, to which he could have offered no defence whatever. No structural alterations can legally take place without first having obtained a faculty. Alter a church, either by addition or subtraction, and any parishioner may obtain an order for its renovation. The rest of the demands were silly and frivolous in the extreme. The Psalms were to be read, and in fact Mr. Andrew was to be male rector.

The Church of England is a corporation enjoying great powers and great privileges, and, in return for these, is bound to obey certain laws. For the conduct of her services the Rubrics give ample directions, allowing either an ornate or a sober service. Carried out according to these legal directions, the services of the Church are capable of being rendered in one continuous song. Even the Burial Service may be a service of song, and very plaintive and touching it is when so rendered. So powerfully is music enthroned in the hearts of the people, that in almost all chapels and even Presbyterian kirks is song used as an aid to devotion. In case the minister oversteps the latitude allowed by the Rubrics, or, on the other hand, does not work fairly up to them, it is the duty of the churchwarden "to present him to his Ordinary at the next visitation." In England, fortunately, no person is allowed to take the law into his own hands. A churchwarden in particular, being set in office to prevent and to punish disorderliness, ought to be specially careful not to become a brawler or disorderly person himself. With regard to the ordering of matters in the church itself, the churchwarden has merely to provide the necessaries for the proper conduct of the services, and to act as a trustee and custodian of the furniture.

It is perfectly clear that in law the brawlers at St. John's were all entirely in the wrong. If Mr. Marshall goes wrong, by all means let a legal remedy be applied; but if he merely exercises his undoubted legal rights, the law ought to be appealed to for his protection. For our own part, we think that Mr. Marshall lacks the wisdom of the serpent, and, like most Ritualists, his decorations favour tinsel. A procession of choristers singing hymns, and headed by a cross-bearer, is, to our minds, a pretty and unobjectionable sight; but a banner bearing upon it a figure of Our Lord would be most objectionable. We object to it as being un-English, and as also being derogatory to the mystical veneration in which we hold Our Lord. To "storied windows richly dight" the same objections hardly lie. Their conventionality relieves them. Processions have just the same legal standing as hymns have—that is, none at all. Primitive Methodists and Orangemen may walk in procession, may sing in procession, and may flaunt flimsy banners in procession, and not one word must be said against them. At the burial of an Orange brother, Mr. Andrew would doubtless array himself in most unaccustomed vestments; but should his rector put on his legal vestments and ornaments, Mr. Andrew's righteous soul is on fire at once. With Mr. Headlam, we most heartily say we are sick of such strifes as these. Any attempt on the true liberties of any church, sect, or communion, we shall always oppose. Mr. Marshall may be, and no doubt is, oftentimes injudicious; but he is a hard worker, and, with the exception of a political party of some score or so, is at one with his congregation. Every English Churchman is Protestant in its true sense; but Mr. Andrew must not forget that the Church of which he is a warden ignores the word entirely.

Mr. Marshall, we understand, has had an interview with the Bishop, who said that the services were all right, and that he will not have them altered. Mr. Andrew will be proceeded against in the Court of Arches, not for brawling, but for the removal of the altar-cross and candlesticks. A similar case—removal of candlesticks and cross—has just been decided against a churchwarden—the judge advising him to make an apology and pay whatever costs the other party consented to accept. It ought also to be noted that one churchwarden cannot legally act without the other.

As a last word we must call Miss Becker to our assistance. One of the demands made by Mr. Andrew was that the women-workers in the parish should be dismissed, and "honest men" appointed in their stead!

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YE AYNCIENTE RYME.
(ON WHYCH YE SAME HATH ITTES FOUNDACION.)

Sing ye Songge of VI pence,
A pokytte fulle of Rye,
IIII and XX Blakbyrdes bakk'd in a pye;
When ye PYE was opened
Ye Byrdes beganne to Synge,
Was not yth a Daintye Dyshe
To sette before ye KYNGE?

* * * *

Ye Kynge was in ye Covntinge Hovse
Covntinge outte ye Monie:
Ye QVENE was in ye Parlore,
Eatynge Bredde & Honie:
Ye Mayde was in ye Garden,
Hangynge outte ye close:
Downe hoppit a Blakbyrde
And peckit offe hyr nose.

The following important engagements have been specially made:

Miss CARRY NELSON,
From the St. James's Theatre, London.

Mdlle. SELINA DOLARO,
From the Lyceum Theatre, London.

Mr. B. SHERIDAN,
From the T
The Great Italian Danseuse,

RITA SANGALLI,
will also appear as La Reine de Ballet.

Krustibilus the XIVth (King of Orniphobia)..... "Take him for all in all you are not likely to find anything like him in Manchester."—*Antony and Juliet.* Act 10 ..... Mr B Sheridan
Queen Versimila (his august Spouse)..... "O wonderful mother, who could so astonish the public."—*Taming of Cleopatra.* Act 1. ..... Mr F A Seymour
Gorgibuster (Duke of Ozokerit) ..... "Now is the winter of Christmas-tide made glorious summer by the fun of Gorgi."—*The Merchant of Athens.* Act 15 ..... Mr J Wainwright
Prince Darling (the Hero of the Piece)..... "Sure such a Prince was never seen."—*Comedy of Verona.* Act XX. ..... Miss Carry Nelson
Prince Krumminetta (the heroine)..... "What's in a name? That which we call a nose by any other name would smell what's sweet." *Julius O'Lanus.* Act 8. ..... Mdlle Selina Dolaro
Folly (a popular character)..... "There needs no post, my lord, to come from the knave to tell us that."—*All's well that like it.* Act o ..... Miss Angelina Claude
Count Lardy (Stick in Waiting)..... "Methinks he seems no bigger than his brain."—*Second Part of King Lear.* Act ½ ..... Mr Stephenson
Herald ..... "Blow out, and crack your cheeks."—*Midsummer Knight Errant.* Act 203 ..... Mr. Forsyth
Running Footman—"I'll run a hurdle race round the world in forty minutes."—*The Tembest of a Shrew.* Act 1000 ..... Mr Byrne
Small Boy..... "To this reflection must we come at last."—*Timon of Venice.* Act 3 ..... Master Titmus
Monkey ..... "What's a cucumber to him, or he to a cucumber?"—*King John's Tale.* Act 1-5 ..... Mrs Leglere
Cat..... "He can a tail unfold, and make his two eyes start from their spheres."—*Black-eyed Andronicus.* Act 50 ..... Mr. Leglere
Guards, Populace, Policeman, Captain of Volunteers, Telegraph Boy, &c.
Spirit of the Falls ..... "O what a falling froth was there."—*Much ado about Windsor.* Act—, &c. ..... Miss Hartley
Queen of the Blackbirds ..... Miss Edmondson

CHARACTERS IN THE PROLOGUE.

Jupiter..... "At Christmas Pantomimes they say Jove laughs."
Two Gentlemen of Denmark. Act ? ..... Mr Maynard
Minerva..... "There are more things than heaven and earth have dreamt of in their philosophy."—*Romeo and Cressida.* Act 2 ..... Mr E Edmonds
Mars ..... "Approach thou like the mugging Rushing Bear."
Macbello. Act ! ! ! ..... Mr Lever
Mercury ..... "An angel and minister of grace"
A Winter's Labour Lost. Act £ s. d. ..... Miss Ballen
Bacchus ..... "Is this a flagon that I see before me."
Cymbiaar Act= ..... Mr Chapman
Apollo.. "No better a musician than this one."—*Henry of Tyre.* Act last.. Mr Lowe
Neptune ..... "Full fathom five or further lies."
2d Part of Troilus. The VIIIth Act on the square..... Mr Jones
Marjoreele..... Miss Barnes | Cupid ..... Miss Bruce
Ornithological Specimens—
Eagle, Owl, Blackbirds, Birds of Paradise, Spiders, &c.

Scene 1. OLYMPUS OR THEREABOUTS.—Perkins.
PROLOGUE.
Scene 2. THE FAIR IN TOFFIOPOLIS.—Perkins.
Before the Gates of the Palace of Krustibil the Fourteenth.
The Dook's Arrival—The Balloon Post—The Royal Roundabout.
Scene 3. THE CORRIDOR.—Maltby.
The Valiant Volunteers. The Indian Basket Trick.
Scen 4. THE COUNTING-HOUSE AND THE KITCHEN.—Perkins.
The Magic Pie—the Incantation—the Duck of Ducks.
Scene 5. THE CASCADES OF ETERNAL YOUTH.—Phillips.
Army of Cockatoo Amazons—Ballet of Birds of Paradise—
The Fairy of the Falls.
RITA SANGALLI.
Scene 6. THE ROAD FROM THE FALLS.—Maltby.
Return of the Triumphant Blackbirds.
Scene 7. THE PARLOUR.—Perkins.
The Toy March—the Bread and Honey and other Domestic Arrangements.
Scene 8. THE PALACE GARDENS.—Perkins.
The Puss and the Pug—the Clothes Line and the Letter—The Disguised Prince.
Scene 9. THE PRINCE'S BOUDOIR.—Perkins.
You-Pie-See. You-Pie-Say.
GRAND TRANSCENDENTAL TRANSFORMATION:
THE HOME OF THE HUMMING BIRDS.—Perkins.
Clown..... By the Great Little ROWELLA,
of Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.
Pantaloon ..... By Mr. CHAPMAN,
from the Princess's Theatre, London.
Harlequin..... By Mr. CHARLES GREEN,
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Scene 3.—THE VAPOUR WITCHES; or,
Ididdlediddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon.

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